No Questions Asked--Return Your Outpatient Record to the Records Room!

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Regaining Custody/Control Medical Records

- Situation:
  - Handcarrying outpatient medical records appear to be more of the rule versus exception
  - Many records missing SF600s; other documentation
  - Regulations in place but not enforced
  - Mobile population used to carrying records
  - Patients don’t trust system to maintain records
  - Medical Records Staff can’t keep up with volume and don’t have resources to get records to locations

Regaining Custody/Control Medical Records

- Why Change:
  - Computer Based Record not a Solution--hard copy of record needed for many years even after CHCSII
  - Communication link for continuity of Patient Care
  - Legal evidence for patients, physicians, and the facility
  - Justification for reimbursement claims to third party payers
  - TRICARE 3.0 reimbursement requires record for reimbursement

Regaining Custody/Control Medical Records

- Who Says So:
  - Services' Regulations clearly state the medical record is the property of the Government and must be maintained by the MTF (http:\\www.tricare.osd.mil\dataquality\medrec.htm)
  - ASD (HA) formally has asked the Services to improve procedures
  - Services Surgeons General have sent out correspondence; they say so!
  - Oversight Bodies cited MHS on past audits and have vocalized plans for future audits
  - Standards in Accreditation Manuals require available, complete records

JCAHO Accreditation Manual (Standards)

- **IM.2.2**. Collection, storage, and retrieval systems are designed to allow timely and easy use of data/information *without compromising their security*
- **IM.2.3**. Records are *protected against loss, destruction, tampering, and unauthorized access or use*.
- **IM.7.9** The organization can quickly assemble all components of a patient's record, regardless of their location in the organization, *when needed for use in patient care*. (Scoring: what % of records indicate all relevant records were assembled when patients received care? Does the medical record or computer system alert users when record components are stored in other locations, and *can practitioners easily retrieve them*?)

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- Status
  - ASD(HA) Memorandum dated 31 Jan 00 requesting assistance of the Surgeons General to assure MTFs improve custody/control procedures
  - Example of Follow Up from Army: 15 March Memo to Commanders emphasizing record must be available/ maintained at MTF--planning session at Patient Administration Conference planned in April.
  - Air Force Headquarters asking activities to report on their progress--part of optimization plan

Regaining Custody/Control Medical Records

- Plan
  - Change Culture--rule is for MTF to retain record
  - Strong Leadership at all levels
  - Marketing/Education Strategies
  - Operational Level Strategies
  - Medical Records Tracking
  - Question? Where is your record? No questions asked, return it to your MTF…….

Regaining Custody/Control Medical Records

- Evaluate
  - **Internal Audits**: Both Navy/USAF asked their commanders to include future Inspector General inspections to include MTF's policies and practices regarding the custody/control of records
  - **External Audits** from Oversight Bodies
  - **Data Quality Management Control Program** has a requirement included for monthly audits regarding records availability and completeness (http://www.tricare.osd.mil/dataquality/mgt_control.htm)